MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT
05753

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON UNDERGRADUATE LIFE

Meeting October 9, 1967

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Our first order of business was discussion of the questionnaire which Mr. Haerle had begun over the weekend. A 3 or 4 man subcommittee will work on the final wording of it. We may also want to ascertain the attitude of each participant toward Middlebury College as a whole.

Our main topic was parietal hours, so-called. Dean O'Brien explained the system at Clark where each dorm has complete autonomy. "Visiting Hours" are from noon to 6 PM and "Parietal Hours" are from 7 PM until midnight. They operate under a sign-in system. For our purposes, we shall define parietal hours as those times when open visiting of men and women is permitted with relatively little regulation.

Dean O'Brien expressed his opinion, in which the other members of the committee seemed to concur, that each student at Middlebury has the right to learn, and that this right must under no circumstances be refused him.

We examined a phrase from page 126 of Sex and the College Student which advised that regulations maintain "Some measure of external control." On this we agreed; the difficulty is deciding exactly what measures must be taken.

In discussing the sign-in system for parietal hours, we expressed various views as to its goal and its effectiveness and came to no conclusion.

We ended this meeting in complete agreement on two points:

1. The college must state clearly its policy on sexual activity in its dormitories.

2. Our current system of parietal hours is not satisfactory and must be changed.

At the next meeting we will consider more specific facets of the parietal policy and begin discussion of the residential principle.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shattuck, Secretary

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON STUDENT LIFE
Meeting of October 16, 1967

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Our opening order of business was the question of student morale on campus now, while we are deliberating. There is a student distrust of the worth and functioning of our committee. We decided to:

1. Make it known through the Campus that the books and reports which Dean O'Brien has asked us to read will be on reserve at the library, available to all interested students.
2. Ask Eric Kolvig for suggestions of other books (within reason) which we should try to read.
3. Ask articulate members of Middlebury's "new(?) student left" to come and give us their views. Dean O'Brien expressed his hope that Ken Keniston from Yale, author of "The Uncommitted", will be able to come and talk to us sometime.

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Our discussion of parietal hours got much more specific than it was last week. Dean O'Brien saw three possibilities for systems:

1. The system we have now, revised a bit to placate the student body for a while longer.
2. A new system to be spelled out by this commission with a more liberal attitude.
3. A system based on dorm autonomy. The opinion of the members present was that, realizing the extent to which the different dorms have different limitations, the best solution would be dorm autocracy within certain limitations to be designated by this commission. There would be provision for the administration to reassert its authority in the dorms through due process. A council of student, faculty and administrative representatives would serve this purpose. Any person or group of persons could go to it with a problem in a dorm which they had not been able to handle. This should protect the rights of the minority. Trying to be more specific, we discussed the limitations we would like to see attached to dorm autonomy:
   1. A preamble would state that:
      -Intoxication and destructive action during parietal hours will not be tolerated.
      -House directors are not responsible for the behavior of the dorm at these times. The executive council of each dorm is.
      -There must be due regard for personal privacy and right to study. This will impower individual dorms to enact their own rules concerning noise, etc.
   2. Certain rules would apply to all dorms:
      - Maximum hours for parietal hours. We have not specified them as yet; there is a suggestion that hours Sunday through Friday be only when the library is open and that they do not start until the afternoon.
      - The dorm president will be responsible for the conduct of the dorm and for clearing the dorm after the parietal hours. He may delegate this authority, but there must be a locatable official available during parietal hours. Each dorm will vote on its parietal hours, once a year or once a semester and submit these hours to Mr. Hinman.

- All Guests must be signed in and out by their host or hostess. This is for the convenience of presidents of the dorm and the person clearing the dorm and may also serve as a reminder of the conduct expected of the guest and host.

3. Everything else would be left up to the individual dorm:
   - Hours (within the limits)
   - Liquor (within the limits of the preamble)
   - Doors

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It was felt that parietal hours in the fraternities was a different matter and will have to be treated as such.

Dean O'Brien felt strongly that our recommendation on parietal hours should be the unanimous opinion of the commission. We hope to meet with the Trustee Sub-committee on Undergraduate Life before we give our final report to the Trustees this winter. We may discuss our report with the Prudential Subcommittee, also.

We started discussion of the residential policy. Dean O'Brien gave us a brief history of it and explained his stand of last year. He saw two reasons for this policy:

1. The benefits accrued to young persons by living with other students.
2. The economics of running a college. All the dorms must be filled in order to pay for them.

While we recognized that the college has the prerogative to decide what kind of a community it wants to be, it was felt that seniors might be regarded in a different light from underclassmen. They have had three years of dorm living and their lives are beginning to be oriented outside of the college buildings.

The suggestion was made that:

1. Freshmen live in dormitories.
2. Sophomores and juniors live in dorms except by special permission of the Deans. They be given top priority for single rooms.
3. Seniors be allowed to live off campus.
4. There be a cut-off date in the spring so that the empty rooms may be filled with freshmen.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shattuck, Secretary

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON STUDENT LIFE

Meeting of October 23, 1967

The first thing we decided at this meeting was that we will invite everyone, students and faculty, to write down his thoughts for us or to speak to a committee member. If we are particularly impressed, we shall ask people to come and speak with the whole committee. Dean O'Brien will ask Dr. Covey and Dr. Parton to come next Monday.

We all read the questionnaire in its revised form and a few changes were made. Mr. Haerle and Dean O'Brien will finalize it and have it copied.

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We changed our meeting time to 11:45 am on Mondays.

Reviewing what we had said in such a sweeping way last week, Mr. Munford emphasized the need for protecting minority rights. At the same time it was felt that the dorm councils ought to be given as much responsibility as possible, retaining only the necessary amount for the college.

We discussed the possibility of attracting extremely liberal students if our recommendation were accepted, but Dean O'Brien felt our image to be established as a conservative school so that we would continue to attract responsible students.

The main topic of our deliberations was the fraternities in relation to parietal hours. Should they be excluded from the privileges that we suggest be given to dormitories? Various feelings were expressed:

1. That there is no need for the use of bedrooms for privacy in entertaining in fraternities because the living room space is sufficient.
2. That there is a definite tendency for fraternities to attract their own kind, which increases the social pressure among brothers to either conform in or be outstanding in their sexual experiences.
3. Granted that this pressure is greater in fraternity houses than in a dorm, is it enough greater that we should refuse to trust them with the privileges we wish to grant to men who live in dormitories?

We will continue this discussion at a later date. Perhaps the answer is a more stringent control by the administration over parietal hours in fraternity houses.

Women's rules and student government responsibilities are the most inflamatory topics remaining on our list. We are going to have to spell out exactly what responsibilities each organization should have. There was a feeling that we should eliminate organizations not essential to the college or the student life.

We were asked to read the relevant sections of the New Student Left for next Monday in preparation for the subcommittee reports.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shattuck

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON STUDENT LIFE
Meeting of October 30, 1967

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

We began our sixth meeting with discussion of the adapted AAUP, NSA report prepared by Dean O'Brien's subcommittee on Student Rights.

A. Academic, non-academic and disciplinary records.
The student cannot see the latter two records, as correspondence may have been given in confidence. Therefore, the student does not know what he is permitting to be revealed. There is no possible way to spell out every circumstance under which the Deans may refer to these records. A basic trust of their integrity is necessary. We suggested, however, a statement that:
1. No hearsay or unsubstantiated evidence will be released.
2. The files themselves will be given to no one except under legal complusion.
It was suggested that disciplinary and non-academic records be destroyed after seven years.

B. Security for speakers invited by student organizations. It was suggested that the need for cancellation due to incomplete security measures for a controversial speaker would be precluded if the college explained to the organization in advance what the security requirements would be.

C. It was felt that the procedure of the men's Judicial Board and the Disciplinary Committee in dealing with disciplinary cases should be clearly defined.

Dean O'Brien pointed out that it is in the area of student publications that this proposal differs most from the principles of the original AAUP-NSA document. This was necessary because of the financial structure of our publications, which will get their money from the central student government body. Thus this body should have the right to approve their constitutions.

Mrs. Kelly reported on the progress of the Subcommittee on women's rules. There is a feeling in this group that women should have the same privileges as men with regard to liquor and parietal hours. The problem of securing minority rights has not been solved, and there has been much discussion of freshmen and whether they should have more restricted hours. Perhaps women's hours should be decided not by the coeducational college council, but by the women alone.

Dean Peterson reported on the progress of his Subcommittee on Student Organizations. They hope for a student government responsible for almost all student activities. They have not yet settled on an appropriate means for representation to this governing body.

In the remaining time we discussed the draft document on open residences.
A. The right to privacy -
It was felt that a "prohibition" of sexual intercourse in the dorms would be unrealistic, but that we could convey the college's stand on the issue by combining this statement with the Brown Report, to say something like the following:

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Given the qualified privacy of a dormitory, sexual activity can be very disturbing to other students and destructive of the general quality of communal life in the residence. The college authorities reserve the right to do what is necessary to maintain a certain quality of communal life. In specific disciplinary cases that may arise, the college's primary concern should be for the emotional and physical well-being of the individuals.

B. Open House Proctors -
This proctor serves as a visible sign of college authority. He could make it a lot easier to get hold of someone if he had some kind of communication system throughout the dorm.
This would be another way of giving students a job.
He would be there if he were needed. His exact role in such a case has not been defined.
Dean O'Brien stressed that the wording of this document is very important.
Documents of regulations of Oberlin, Antioch, Swarthmore and Bates are now in Dean O'Brien's office. The Dean commented that they are often more conservative than we are.

Next week we will concentrate on individual and minority rights. President Armstrong will eat lunch with us.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shattuck
Secretary

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION OF STUDENT LIFE
Meeting of November 13, 1967

Mr. Haerle informed us that the questionnaires are now in the final stages of preparation. The student questionnaires will be administered by the student members of the commission under exam conditions and put in the package right in the room, ready to be mailed. For those who cannot come the first time we ask them, there will be a second opportunity.

We talked to Dr. Parton and Dr. Covey about some aspects of our report. Dr. Parton felt strongly that freshmen have a lot to adjust to and should not be subjected either to extremely liberal regulations or to off campus living. Dr. Covey stressed the fact that an important part of growing up is learning how to handle more and more responsibility. He felt that if students were called upon to decide how to limit student behavior, they would make more realistic demands.

We discussed several questions but came to no conclusions:

- Allowing freshman men to go to fraternity parties.

- Does the college have the right to prohibit sexual intercourse in the dorms?

- Dorm councils
  Will they, backed by a definite rule established by either the college or the dorm and having recourse to the college council, go to someone who is breaking that rule and ask him to comply with it?

- Residential policy
  Dr. Covey felt that upperclassmen ought to be able to live off campus but that it should not be made a special privilege to be sought, merely a choice to be made.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shattuck, Secretary

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON STUDENT LIFE
Meeting of November 20, 1967

Dean O'Brien began this meeting by telling us some of what was discussed at New Haven last week. He explained that the society in which a college exists must be convinced that the college will discipline itself or it will step in, which causes many complications.

In the course of reviewing the constitution of the Middlebury Student Association it was suggested that:

1. Proposals coming to the CC be passed at that level if they lie within the guidelines set by us.
2. We incorporate the ultimate college authority into the CC as much as possible by:
   a. Giving the faculty members and administrators on the CC voting privileges.
   b. Having a CC with a student majority and non-voting faculty and administrative members and an Executive Committee with a majority of faculty members and administrators.

We then considered several questions in relation to the drafting of our document:

1. A quote from the college charter in the preamble stating the responsibilities of the Trustees, the President, and the Deans.
2. An explanation in the preamble of our broad objectives and considerations.
3. Treating the problem of sexual morality on campus
4. The residential policy
5. Drugs
6. Academic policy making
7. The relationship of extra-curricular activities to the academic load.

We discussed Dean O'Brien's Revisions and Additions to the rights document and then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shattuck, Secretary